

THE MALONE SOCIETY

(Registered Charity 1027048)

ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26

*The Annual General Meeting of the Society
will be held in the Rainolds Room,
Corpus Christi College, Oxford,
on Saturday 6 June 2026, at 3.30 p.m.*

Object of the Society

The object of The Malone Society is to advance education in the field of English drama, primarily by making accessible – to all students, scholars, public libraries, university libraries, and the public at large – materials and publications for the study of early English drama through the editing, printing, and publication of dramatic texts and of documents relating to the drama before 1642.

Organization and Structure

The Society operates primarily through a Council whose members are elected at each Annual General Meeting of the Society's members. The principal officers are the President, Chairman, General Editor, Executive Secretary, and Financial Director. Currently the editorial function is shared among four persons. At present the Society has no salaried employees.

NEWS FROM COUNCIL

This year has been one of change and new beginnings. At the June Annual General Meeting (2025), the membership approved Council's recommendation that the Society apply to incorporate the charity as a CIO. Council duly instructed our solicitors to prepare an application to the Charity Commission, and I am pleased to confirm that we were recently notified that this application was successful (21 January 2026). We are now in the process of transferring the Society's assets to the new incorporated charity.

In other good news, I am, likewise, pleased to confirm the election of Council member and world-leading scholar and editor of early British drama, Dr Martin Wiggins as the Society's new President, following the passing away of our previous President and Chair, Mrs Leah Scragg. Dr Wiggins' works include the 11-volume *British Drama 1533-1642: A Catalogue* (OUP), which describes and documents every known play of the period, as well as books such as *Journeyman in Murder*, *Shakespeare and the Drama of His Time*, and *Drama and the Transfer of Power in Renaissance England*. Dr Wiggins is one of the longest serving members of Council, having held various offices, including an ongoing role as a member of the Editorial Committee.

In the past year, we have also welcomed two new colleagues to Council, Dr Héloïse Sénéchal as Executive Secretary and Dr Lucy Holehouse as Membership Secretary. Dr Sénéchal researches early modern playhouse communities and has recently published work mapping properties affiliated to the Globe. She is the founder of the *King's Women 1594-1642* project, and is currently editing several prose works by Thomas Dekker. Dr Holehouse is also a member of the *King's Women* project and is currently engaged in researching sixteenth and seventeenth century civic performance in London. We are very fortunate to have them on Council and welcome the expertise they bring to our work.

Dr S n chal takes over the office of Executive Secretary from Professor Katharine Craik who served the Society as Secretary for more than eighteen years, while Dr Holehouse takes over as Membership Secretary from Dr Harry McCarthy who has taken up a new role at the University of Southern California. I am sure you will join me in welcoming H lo se and Lucy to their new offices and in thanking Katie and Harry for their service to the Society.

While the year has brought a welcome renewal of Council's membership, it has presented the Society with some challenges, too. Most notably, Green Street Bindery, which the Society has used for its annual volume for many years, unexpectedly ceased trading in the summer of 2025. As an interim solution, *The Parliament of Bees* was distributed instead by the firm responsible for printing the annual volume (Henry Ling). The Society is now in the process of making longer-term arrangements for the binding and distribution of forthcoming and future volumes.

In better news, the Society is pleased to have been able to continue its sponsorship of the Annual Shakespeare Association of America (SAA) Malone Society Dance in Denver, Colorado (1-4 April 2026), offering a fresh opportunity to garner attention for the Society and its work. It also agreed to be a sponsor for the Beyond Shakespeare Podcast (1 February 2026-31 January 2027) as a further way of promoting the Society. In other good news, Council has also agreed to launch an annual essay prize in memory of Dr Elizabeth Brennan, following her generous bequest to the Society, and is working on plans for a Travel Bursary scheme in memory of ex-President and Chair of the Society, Mrs Leah Scragg. I hope to be able to update members on these initiatives in the next Annual Report.

Siobhan Keenan

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

John Day's *The Parliament of Bees* (1641), edited by Amy Bowles, was published in August 2025 and has been distributed to members. Our next volume to publish will be Michael Wagoner's edition of *Beggars' Bush*, which is now in production.

Forthcoming volumes include a further volume of *Collections*; Jos  P rez D ez's edition of *The Elder Brother*; and Jennie Challinor's edition of *Lingua*, a university play published in 1607.

Prospective editors of future volumes should consult the guidelines on the Society's website.

Eleanor Collins

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

Membership of The Malone Society has remained stable this year, and the Society's membership base continues to diversify. At the time of writing, the Society has 410 members on its books, the vast majority of whom were eligible for receipt of the most recent Annual Volume, having brought their subscriptions up to date. As ever, any member unsure of their current subscription status should contact me at lucy.holehouse@rhul.ac.uk.

We continue to promote the Society's activities and membership in person at conferences (including at the ever lively Malone Society Dance at the Shakespeare Association of America conference in Denver), as well as online through our Bluesky account (@malonesociety.bsky.social), with which many of our members seem to have enjoyed engaging. At the time of writing, these initiatives have attracted twenty-five new members to the Society since the publication of the 2025 Annual Report, and we hope very much that these members will remain with us for many years to come.

Thanks in large part to our Overseas Officers, with whom I have been in regular contact, in addition to our large UK and North American memberships we continue to attract members from Australia,

Austria, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Portugal, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Taiwan. Our reduced-rate student membership and offer of three free books upon joining continues to prove popular, as does our reduced membership rate for scholars who identify as contingently, precariously, or independently employed. We are hopeful that our forthcoming ECR travel bursary will bring in even more members.

My thanks, as ever, to Natalie Codling at Redit Publications for her vital assistance with the membership database.

Lucy Holehouse

RESEARCH GRANTS

For administrative reasons, the applications deadline for the 2025 research grants competition was extended until April 2026, so awards will not be made until June. The Society invites applications for the 2026 competition, for which the deadline is 30 November; further details appear on the Society's website.

Prof. Tracey Hill, who was awarded the 2025 Colin Baldwin Fellowship, has made an extensive investigation of dramatic references in the records of the Merchant Taylors' Company of London. She has discovered a record of the termination of paid performances at Merchant Taylors' School in 1574 'by reason of the tumultuous disordered persones repayinge hither'; evidence that the Midsummer Watch festivities, thought to have been discontinued in the 1550s, in fact continued until the 1580s; considerable amounts of new information about the inauguration of the four Merchant Taylor Lords Mayor between 1561 and 1610, and about the company's and its school's contributions to the pageantry for the 1604 royal entry of King James I and the 1606 visit of King Christian IV of Denmark; and records of regular performances by students of the Merchant Taylors' School at the company's Hall. Her work will in due course be published by the Records of Early English Drama project.

Martin Wiggins

JOHN EDWARD KERRY PRIZE

The John Edward Kerry Prize was not awarded in 2025, as no suitable application was received. The call for the 2026 prize was advertised on the Society website (deadline: 23 April 2026). We hope to be able to report on the 2026 winner in the next Annual Report.

Martin Wiggins

ORDERS SECRETARY'S REPORT

This year we have seen continued interest in the full range of the Malone back catalogue, with perennial favourites as well as less-ordered volumes making their way from our back-stock to readers across the world. Successful sale events have helped support our mission to get our books into people's hands, where their 'permanent utility' is experienced. Some technical issues with the online platform disrupted dispatch in late 2025, which we hope has now been resolved. Our apologies if your order was affected, and should you have any issues with future orders, please feel free, as always, to contact me on the email address below.

Our orders assistant is now Doctor Sarah Hodgson. Congratulations, Sarah! Having graduated from the Shakespeare Institute, that means that she has now moved on from her position with the Society.

We have been lucky once again to have a wonderful researcher working with us in the role, and doing so with impeccable efficiency. On behalf of Council, I am glad to record our sincere thanks here for everything Sarah has done, and to wish her well in all future endeavours.

As always, if you are using our volumes in your research or teaching, or if you are performing any of the texts, we would love to share the work you are doing via our website. We would particularly like to hear how you are using Malone editions in your graduate and undergraduate teaching – do let us know: S.C.Smith@bham.ac.uk.

Simon Smith

WEBSITE

We have continued to update the Society's website; updates include setting up information and submission systems for our new prizes. As always, do let us know if you are using Malone Society publications in your research or teaching.

Lucy Munro

CONFERENCE

The Society's 2025 conference, originally scheduled to mark the 400-year anniversary of the death of John Fletcher, has been subject to unavoidable delay. It is hoped that this event will take place during 2026.

José A. Pérez Díez

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Malone Society was held at 3.30 p.m. on Saturday 7 June 2025. Apologies for absence were received from Dr Collins, Prof. Proudfoot, and Prof. Richardson. Prof. Keenan welcomed members joining the meeting in person and online.

The Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting, on 8 June 2024, recorded in the Annual Report for 2024/25, were accepted as a correct record on the proposal of Dr McCarthy, seconded by Dr Lowe. There were no matters arising. The statement of accounts was also accepted as a true record, on the proposal of Mr Cunningham, seconded by Prof. Munro. The Annual Report as a whole was accepted on the proposal of Dr Shmygol, seconded by Dr Smith.

Dr Collins, Co-ordinating Editor, reported (by message) that the Society's volume for 2023 and 2024, *The Devil's Charter*, had recently been published and distributed to members. *The Parliament of Bees*, edited by Amy Bowles, was at press. The Society has a full schedule of volumes until 2028.

Mr Cunningham, Financial Director, reported that the Society remains in good financial health for the foreseeable future despite the current turbulence in global markets. Its position has been strengthened this year thanks to a generous bequest from the late Dr Elizabeth Brennan. The Society's trustees confirmed that they had no new conflicts of interest to report.

Dr McCarthy, Membership Secretary, noted that membership remains steady. The Society will be promoted at conferences in 2025/26. Dr McCarthy registered his gratitude to the Society's overseas officers for their assistance. Members are invited to get in touch if in doubt about whether their subscription to the Society is up to date. Prof. Keenan recorded thanks to Dr McCarthy who will shortly resign his position as Membership Secretary, to be succeeded by Dr Lucy Holehouse.

Dr Smith, Orders Secretary, thanked Orders Assistant Sarah Hodgson for her work on behalf of the Society. A recent book sale had proved successful, and Dr Smith is working on promoting the Society at a variety of national and international conferences.

Prof. Munro, Website Officer, reported that the Society's website had recently been updated. Members who are using Malone Society editions for teaching, performance or scholarship are warmly invited to inform Prof. Munro so that these activities can be shared on the website.

Dr Pérez Díez, Events Organiser, reported that the Society's conference for 2024, on John Lyly's *Campaspe*, had been held at St Anne's College, Oxford on Sunday 20 October, in honour of Mrs Scragg. The 2025 conference will mark the 400-year anniversary of the death of John Fletcher. It is hoped that this event will take place at King's College London.

Prof. Keenan thanked the officers for their reports and for their continuing work on the Society's behalf. The Council officers were re-elected *en bloc* on the proposal of Kevin de Ornellas, seconded by Roberta Barker.

The members of Council were also re-elected *en bloc* on the proposal of Tristan Marshall, seconded by Laurie Johnson.

Mr Cunningham reported on the Society's plans to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in order to increase its protection as a legal entity. This proposal requires agreement from the membership to dissolve the current charity and to set up a new one in accordance with the CIO 'foundational' model recommended by the UK charity commission. The Society's assets are to be transferred on 1 February 2026. Following a vote, this proposal was passed by the nineteen members present (in favour: eleven in person, eight on Zoom; abstentions: one on Zoom).

The next AGM was arranged for 3.30 p.m. on Saturday 6 June 2026, and the meeting closed at 4.00 p.m.

Katharine Craik

FINANCIAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

This year's accounts and report were prepared by Alanbrookes Group Ltd in March 2026, and await approval at the Society's AGM. Their report confirmed that there were no matters that needed to be brought to the attention of the Trustees in relation to the matters covered by their examination.

The Draft Statement of Receipts, Payments and Assets is detailed below.

The publication of *The Devil's Charter* and *The Parliament of Bees* in the same calendar year presented us with higher than usual costs in this financial year, and the sudden collapse of our binders necessitated additional costs to dispatch *The Parliament of Bees*.

During the year, withdrawals of £15,000 from investments were approved to support ongoing operations.

Generally, the financial position of the Society remains sound, and we have recently completed the process of incorporating the society, giving us a framework to effectively manage the finances of the Society in the long term.

Paul Cunningham

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS, PAYMENTS AND ASSETS
For the year ended 31 January 2026

<u>Opening balances</u>		<u>Net Receipts and payments</u>	32,653.49
Current a/c (RBS)	23,075.45		
COIF-C	4,730.53	Gain on sale of investments COIF-A	2,697.91
COIF-A (cost)	7,558.63	Gain on sale of investments COIF-R	<u>31,981.23</u>
COIF-R (cost)	86,130.63	Surplus/(deficit) for the year	<u>2,025.65</u>
Stripe balance	35.49		
<u>Total opening funds</u>	<u>121,530.73</u>	Opening balances	121,530.73
<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Closing balances</u>	<u>123,556.38</u>
Subscriptions:			
UK	3,563.85	Represented by:	
Europe	387.91	Current a/c (RBS)	5,258.62
USA	2,610.57	COIF-C	4,929.36
Canada	421.15	COIF-A	5,256.54
Australia/New Zealand	893.27	COIF-R	<u>108,111.86</u>
Asia	222.99	<u>Total closing funds</u>	<u>123,556.38</u>
	<u>8,099.74</u>		
Royalties	275.40	Investments @ Closing Market Value	
Other revenue		COIF-C	4,929.36
(donation refunded re: prior year)	(2,145.83)	COIF-A	11,836.29
Donations	89.08	COIF-R	<u>344,260.65</u>
Bequest	–	<u>Total investments</u>	<u>361,026.30</u>
Interest received	198.83		
Book sales	<u>1,358.30</u>		
<u>Total receipts</u>	<u>7,875.52</u>		
<u>Payments</u>			
Book printing & digitisation	5,114.41		
Binding	4,624.15		
Book distribution	1,548.00		
Postage, Freight & Courier	12,018.43		
Leaflets/Annual Report	246.00		
Audit & Accountancy fees	1,620.00		
IT Software & Consumables	57.00		
Administration	7,000.00		
Printing & Stationery	–		
Stripe charges	164.75		
Legal expenses	6,900.00		
Stipend	–		
Grant payments	–		
Sponsorship	789.82		
Council meetings	291.60		
Travel & Subsistence	<u>154.85</u>		
<u>Total payments</u>	<u>40,529.01</u>		

The above accounts have been the subject of independent examination by Alanbrookes Group Ltd, Chartered Accountants, of 24 The Glove Factory, Holt, Wiltshire BA14 6RL. Their report confirmed that there were no matters that needed to be brought to the attention of the Trustees in relation to the matters covered by their examination. A full copy of their report may be obtained on request.

Notes to the Financial Statement

1. Our financial statements are prepared on a cash basis.
2. We have no overdue short-term liabilities, no long-term liabilities, and no leaseholds.
3. Investments are stated at both cost and market value.
4. Investments are consistent with our investment policies. The performance of our investments met our objectives.

Notes on Financial Policies

1. Current account funds not needed to satisfy actual and anticipated obligations are transferred to investments.
2. Our principal investment policies are: (i) For capital protection and spreading risk, to invest only in funds managed by the Charities Official Investment Fund (COIF). (ii) As between two types of shares (Income and Accumulation), to use only Accumulation shares, so that dividends are automatically reinvested within each fund. (iii) For liquidity, capital protection, and income, to keep in COIF-C, a deposit fund, enough cash to meet anticipated near-term needs. (iv) For capital protection and a return higher than 'C', to invest a further portion in fixed interest securities, COIF-A. (v) For long-term growth and a hedge against inflation, to invest the rest in COIF-R. (vi) To review the distribution of funds among 'C', 'A', and 'R' at least three times a year, taking account of the planned expenditure, risk exposure, the balance between 'A', and 'R', and conditions in the market.
3. The ethics of our investment policies are the same as those of the Charities Official Investment Fund.
4. The Council considers that a sum of £100,000 would normally cover outstanding obligations from previous years and cover planned expenditures. We aim to have reserves in excess of this, with the following purposes: to protect the Society from risks such as fluctuations in income, expenditure, and the stock market; to ensure we can subsidize the volumes we make available to members; to delay increasing subscriptions for as long as possible; to offer members books from our backlist at substantial discounts; from time to time to provide members, and by extension the general public, with two volumes in a year; to generate funds to enhance benefits to members and the public; to shield us from the necessity of borrowing; to have funds available for buying paper and cloth at bulk prices when appropriate; to allow us to mount conferences for members and the public; to enable us to place a selection of our volumes on-line for use by the academic world and the public at large; to demonstrate financial soundness to attract the highest calibre Council member; to allow us to take advantage of attractive opportunities consistent with our object; and to shelter us from strategic vulnerabilities.

Risk Management

The Council has assessed the major risks to which the Society is exposed and is satisfied that the policies and systems are in place to protect us to the extent feasible from the likely effects of these risks.

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

<i>President:</i>	Dr Martin Wiggins
<i>Chairman:</i>	Prof. Siobhan Keenan
<i>Editorial Committee:</i>	Prof. Richard Proudfoot, Dr Maria Shmygol, Dr Martin Wiggins, Prof. Henry Woudhuysen
<i>Co-ordinating Editor:</i>	Dr Eleanor Collins
<i>Executive Secretary:</i>	Dr H�elo�ise S�en�echal
<i>Financial Director:</i>	Mr Paul Cunningham
<i>Membership Secretary:</i>	Dr Lucy Holehouse
<i>Website Officer:</i>	Prof. Lucy Munro
<i>Orders Secretary:</i>	Dr Simon Smith
<i>Archivist:</i>	Dr Eleanor Lowe
<i>Events Organiser:</i>	Dr Jos�e P�erez D�iez
<i>Other Members of Council:</i>	Prof. Catherine Richardson, Prof. Katharine Craik

UK AND OVERSEAS REPRESENTATIVES AND ADVISORS

<i>Representative for North America:</i>	Dr Molly Yarn
<i>Representatives for Canada:</i>	Prof. Roberta Barker and Dr David Nicol, Fountain School of Performing Arts, Dalhousie University, 6101 University Avenue, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3H 4R2
<i>Representative for Australia and New Zealand:</i>	Prof. David McInnis, School of Culture and Communication, Room 216 John Medley West Tower, University of Melbourne 3010, Australia
<i>Representative for Japan:</i>	Prof. Yukiko Mori, Division of Language and Culture Studies, Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology, Nakacho, Koganei, Tokyo 184-8588, Japan
<i>Representative for Continental Europe:</i>	Prof. Jes�s Tronch P�erez, Departament de Filologia Anglesa i Alemanya, Universitat de Val�ncia, Av. Blasco Ib�n�ez, 32, 46010 Valencia, Spain
<i>Other Associates:</i>	Prof. John Creaser, Prof. John Jowett, Prof. Helen Moore

WEBSITE: The address of the Society's website is www.malonesociety.com

CORRESPONDENCE: Correspondence should in the first instance be sent to Natalie Codling at the following email address: malone@reditpublishing.com